

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 889

By Rich

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of James Harvey Shelton  
of Fayette County.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of James Harvey “Preacher” Shelton; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a lifelong resident of Fayette County, Mr. Shelton was born on February 6, 1926, to Mamie and James Wiggins Shelton in Braden; and

WHEREAS, Preacher Shelton matriculated to the University of Tennessee at Martin, where he played football and was elected Mr. UTM before earning his Bachelor of Science degree from The University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton served his country with the courage and conviction of a true patriot during World War II, serving as a member of the United States Army Air Corps in the South Pacific Theater and seeing military action on Okinawa; and

WHEREAS, known throughout the region for his peerless integrity and leadership abilities, James Harvey Shelton was elected Fayette County Trustee in 1952, a position he held for fourteen years; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton served with acumen and alacrity for thirty-five years as the president of Somerville Bank and Trust and, under his astute leadership, that renowned financial institution experienced tremendous growth and stability; and

WHEREAS, during his time at the helm, the bank earned a reputation as one of the nation’s top banks in terms of financial performance and was ranked sixteenth in financial strength out of 14,000 banks across the nation; and

WHEREAS, designated as a Leader in Banking Excellence, this extraordinary gentlemen was a true leader in his field and rendered sterling service as the president of the Tennessee Banker's Association; and

WHEREAS, Preacher Shelton distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order through his work with the Boy Scouts and Fayette County's Little League baseball program, as well as through his distinguished service as the president of the Lions Club, an organizer of the Fayette County Chamber of Commerce, and as a Mason, a Shriner, and the Master of Somerville Lodge #73; and

WHEREAS, one of Fayette County's greatest humanitarians, Preacher Shelton endeavored to serve his fellow citizens through his selfless support of a host of local charities, including Fayette Cares, the Red Cross, and the Cancer Society, among many others; and

WHEREAS, a leader in the agricultural community, Mr. Shelton was actively engaged in farming throughout his life and highly involved in Agricenter International; and

WHEREAS, Preacher Shelton was an avid sportsman, regularly enjoying hunting, fishing, and all of the wonders that the great outdoors has to offer; and

WHEREAS, Preacher Shelton was a devout member of the First United Methodist Church of Somerville, which he served as a Trustee, the Church Treasurer, and the Chairman of the Board; he was also entrusted with the unique responsibility of placing the lighted cross on the Town of Somerville's water tower; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable man was also deeply devoted to his family and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton was preceded in death by his beloved mother, father, and sister, Viola; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Betty Shelton, with whom he treasured fifty-nine years of martial bliss; and

WHEREAS, Preacher Shelton was the proud father and father-in-law of Stephen and Carol Harvey and Joe Wiggins and the devoted grandfather of Anna, Drew, Mary, Laura, James, Mary Lois, and Madeline; and

WHEREAS, he will be sorely missed by his sister, Martha Lou Hudspeth, and a host of friends, family, and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Shelton leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of James Harvey Shelton, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Shelton.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.